

Public Lands Interim Committee:

I will be hunting on public lands on the days that public meetings will be held. I wish I could be here in person. Because of my interest and passion for hunting public lands and for the preservation of plant and animal species that have no voice to speak for their own protection, I am writing you to say that federal management should stay with the federal government and not be moved to the State of Idaho. This is nothing more than a land grab for special interests and for-profit interests that will lay waste the resource treasures for all citizens that come from these lands being managed for watershed health, salmon populations, wildlife, and for the basic right of all species to be allowed to exist.

I do not think the State would perform better multiple use management than the federal government. Multiple use management balances wildlife needs, recreation needs, fish needs, and watershed health needs against the need for timber, minerals, and livestock forage.

Federal lands are not owned by the federal government but by all American citizens. It is called federal lands because the federal government is directed to manage these public lands for all citizens, and not just for Idaho citizens or privateers (corporate interests). The mistake of thinking the state can take on the federal burden of multiple use management and not provide biased management for special interests, like timber and mining, is the flaw in this process. The value of these U.S. public lands is becoming more and more important as national treasure and their intrinsic values that come from wise conservation. The future economic benefits of these lands for rural Idahoans comes from robust salmon populations, thriving deer and elk populations and other recreational benefits from healthy ecosystems.

Through the 1960-1980s much of the national forest lands were over logged and over roaded that has lead to much of the present damage and need for restoration of these forest lands, watershed health, and salmon spawning and rearing. BLM lands are for the most part over-grazed. I spend toime every year in the Owyhee canyons and as a sportsman, I 'm often embarrassed by the damage livestock perfrom on our range lands.

I believe industries like, timber, mining, and livestock grazing needs to illustrate a long period of good land stewardship where they already exist and help in the repair of damaged public lands before I would ever consider the State of Idaho having the responsibility of federal lands management. I say this because these special interests have incredible clout in Idaho at the expense of the public good. The state of Idaho needs to show the ability to better manage their own lands for multiple use and exploit these state lands for revenue in lieu of taxes.

This effort to have the state of Idaho manage federal lands is a poorly disguised attempt to further exploit public lands by private interests and have tax payers pick up the tab after the damage is done. I am strongly against and land management transfer to the state.

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